

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Previously amended): A fully automated method of facilitating an electronic auction between a prospective buyer and a plurality of prospective sellers with near perfect information, comprising the steps of:
 - a) inputting into a computer a buyer's request for information about products or services;
 - b) finding information in response to the request for information;
 - c) communicating at least part of the information found to the buyer;
 - d) inputting into the computer a buyer's request for an offer;
 - e) communicating the request for an offer to at least two of the sellers;
 - f) receiving offers, including terms of sale in response to the request for an offer, from at least two of the sellers;
 - g) automatically generating rating information about seller offers based on a plurality of predetermined criteria, wherein said plurality of predetermined criteria include at least one criterion other than price;
 - h) communicating information regarding at least some of the seller offers to at least one other seller;
 - i) receiving an adjusted offer from at least one of the sellers during a specified auction period; and
 - j) communicating information regarding at least some of the seller offers and at least part of the rating information to the buyer.
3. (Previously amended): The method of claim 2, wherein said request for an offer is inputted using an electronic template.

4. (Original): The method of claim 3, wherein said template includes a list of product or service features.
5. (Original): The method of claim 2, wherein said information communicated to the buyer includes information found with a suggestion module.
6. (Original): The method of claim 2, wherein all the steps occur without the buyer actively initiating a transfer to a different computer.
7. (Currently amended): The method of claim ~~1~~ 2, wherein the computer is operated by a service provider unrelated to either the buyer or the sellers.
8. (Original): The method of claim 7, wherein the service provider operates via an independent destination on the World Wide Web.
9. (Original): The method of claim 7, wherein the service provider is embedded within a third party service.
10. (Original): The method of claim 9, wherein the embedded service is operated by the service provider on an out-source basis.
11. (Original): The method of claim 9, wherein the embedded service is operated by the third party.
12. (Currently amended): The method of claim ~~1~~ 2, wherein said request is input using a graphical user interface.
13. (Original): The method of claim 12, wherein said graphical user interface includes natural language input.
14. (Original): The method of claim 12, wherein said graphical user interface includes an electronic template for a structured language query.

15. (Original): The method of claim 12, wherein said graphical user interface includes a list of requested features.
16. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said request is input using a voice user interface.
17. (Original): The method of claim 16, wherein said voice user interface includes natural language input.
18. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said request includes a plurality of criteria concerning buyer preferences.
19. (Original): The method of claim 18, wherein said criteria are weighted at least in part by the buyer.
20. (Original): The method of claim 18, wherein said criteria are weighted at least in part by a computer program.
21. (Original): The method of claim 20, wherein said computer program's weightings are based at least in part on information about the buyer's previous buying behavior.
22. (Original): The method of claim 20, wherein said computer program's weightings are based at least in part on information about the buyer's peer group.
23. (Original): The method of claim 20, wherein said computer program's weightings are based at least in part on a demographic model.
24. (Original): The method of claim 18, wherein said criteria are weighted at least in part by an expert recommendation.
25. (Original): The method of claim 18, wherein said criteria are shown using a graphical user interface.

26. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said request includes constraints chosen by the buyer.
27. (Original): The method of claim 26, wherein said constraints include a limited geographic area.
28. (Original): The method of claim 26, wherein said constraints include a distance from the buyer.
29. (Original): The method of claim 26, wherein said constraints include a level of product or service quality.
30. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said request includes asking the sellers to apply a suggestion module to said request.
31. (Original): The method of claim 30, wherein said module can exclude specific products or services from a seller's offer.
32. (Original): The method of claim 30, wherein said module can augment a seller's offer to include additional products or services not specifically requested by the buyer.
33. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said buyer remains anonymous to said prospective sellers.
34. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said communicating of the request for an offer includes searching a database for offers corresponding to the request.
35. (Original): The method of claim 34, wherein said database is at least in part precompiled.

36. (Original): The method of claim 34, wherein said database is at least in part compiled on the fly.
37. (Currently amended): The method of claim 4 2, wherein a software process initiates the communicating the request for an offer step at specific time periods.
38. (Currently amended): The method of claim 4 2, further comprising communicating information about the buyer to at least one of the sellers.
39. (Original): The method of claim 38, wherein said information about the buyer is communicated to a seller in exchange for consideration to the buyer.
40. (Original): The method of claim 39, wherein said consideration is a price discount.
41. (Original): The method of claim 39, wherein said consideration is a price rebate.
42. (Original): The method of claim 39, wherein said consideration is a loyalty program incentive.
43. (Original): The method of claim 38, wherein said information about the buyer includes personal information supplied by the buyer.
44. (Original): The method of claim 38, wherein said information about the buyer includes the buyer's credit information.
45. (Original): The method of claim 38, wherein said information about the buyer includes information supplied by a third party.
46. (Original): The method of claim 38, wherein said information about the buyer includes information about the buyer's prior use of buyer's auctions.

47. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said rating information is a ranking.
48. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said rating information is a numerical score.
49. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said rating information is a letter grade.
50. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said rating information is an analog rating.
51. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said seller offers include the identity of the offerer.
52. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said communicating of seller offers and rating information takes place before the auction period.
53. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said communicating of seller offers and rating information takes place during the auction period.
54. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said communicating of seller offers and rating information takes place after the auction period.
55. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said communicating of seller offers and rating information takes place in exchange for consideration.
56. (Original): The method of claim 55, wherein said consideration includes an information fee.
57. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said adjusted offer is adjusted at least in part by a computer algorithm.

58. (Original): The method of claim 57, wherein said computer algorithm uses the seller's business rules.
59. (Original): The method of claim 57, wherein said computer algorithm uses information about the buyer.
60. (Original): The method of claim 57, wherein said computer algorithm uses information about the seller.
61. (Original): The method of claim 57, wherein said computer algorithm uses at least part of the information communicated about the seller offers.
62. (Currently amended): The method of claim 42, wherein the time remaining in the specified auction period is communicated to the buyer and at least one of the sellers.
63. (Currently amended): The method of claim 42, wherein the buyer's auction includes specified auction parameters.
64. (Original): The method of claim 63, wherein said auction parameters are specified by the buyer.
65. (Original): The method of claim 63, wherein said auction parameters are specified by a computer program.
66. (Original): The method of claim 63, wherein said auction parameters include the number of auction rounds.
67. (Original): The method of claim 63, wherein said auction parameters include the time for an auction round.
68. (Original): The method of claim 63, wherein said auction parameters include the use of sealed bids during an auction round.

69. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said adjusted offer expires after a time period specified by the offerer.
70. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said adjusted offer expires after a time specified by the offerer.
- 71-73. (Cancelled)
74. (Previously amended): A fully automated method of facilitating an electronic auction between a prospective buyer and a plurality of prospective sellers with near perfect information, comprising the steps of:
- a) inputting into a computer a buyer's request for an offer;
 - b) communicating the request for an offer to at least two of the sellers;
 - c) receiving offers, including terms of sale in response to the request for an offer, from at least two of the sellers;
 - d) automatically generating rating information about seller offers based on a plurality of predetermined criteria;
 - e) communicating information regarding at least some of the seller offers to at least one other seller;
 - f) receiving an adjusted offer from at least one of the sellers during a specified auction period; and
 - g) communicating information regarding at least some of the seller offers and at least part of the rating information to the buyer, wherein a software process initiates the communicating of seller offers and rating information to the buyer when a buyer-specified event occurs.
75. (Original): The method of claim 74, wherein the buyer-specified event is the receipt of a seller offer with a rating above a buyer-specified rating level.
76. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein said communicating of seller offers and rating information to the buyer includes side-by-side comparisons of a plurality of seller offers.

77. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, further comprising communicating an offer for ancillary goods and services to the buyer, wherein said offer is related to the buyer's request for an offer and attached to an offer from a seller.
78. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, further comprising adding information about the auction to a database.
79. (Original): The method of claim 78, wherein said information about the auction is generated by the buyer's input.
80. (Original): The method of claim 78, wherein said information about the auction is generated by a seller's input.
81. (Original): The method of claim 78, wherein said information about the auction is generated by the auction process.
82. (Original): The method of claim 78, wherein said information about the auction is generated by a third party.
- 83-100. (Cancelled)
101. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, further comprising communicating an acceptance by the buyer of at least one of the seller offers to at least one of the sellers.
- 102-105. (Cancelled)
106. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein the step of automatically generating rating information about seller offers occurs before the step of receiving an adjusted offer.

107. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein the step of automatically generating rating information about seller offers occurs after the step of receiving an adjusted offer.
108. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein the step of automatically generating rating information about seller offers occurs both before and after the step of receiving an adjusted offer.
109. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein the step of communicating information regarding at least some of the seller offers to at least one other seller occurs before the step of receiving an adjusted offer.
110. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein the step of communicating information regarding at least some of the seller offers to at least one other seller occurs after the step of receiving an adjusted offer.
111. (Currently amended): The method of claim 1 2, wherein the step of communicating information regarding at least some of the seller offers to at least one other seller occurs both before and after the step of receiving an adjusted offer.
112. (Cancelled)
113. (New): A computer-implemented method, comprising:
- a) receiving in a computer a buyer's request for information about products or services;
 - b) finding information in response to the request for information;
 - c) communicating at least part of the information found to the buyer;
 - d) receiving in the computer a buyer's request for an offer;
 - e) communicating the request for an offer to at least two sellers;
 - f) receiving offers, including terms of sale in response to the request for an offer, from at least two sellers;
 - g) automatically generating rating information about seller offers based on a plurality of predetermined criteria, wherein said

plurality of predetermined criteria include at least one criterion other than price;

- h) communicating information regarding at least some of the seller offers to at least one other seller;
- i) receiving an adjusted offer from at least one of the sellers during a specified auction period; and
- j) communicating information regarding at least some of the seller offers and at least part of the rating information to the buyer.

114. (New): A computer system, comprising:

- a) means for receiving in a computer a buyer's request for information about products or services;
- b) means for finding information in response to the request for information;
- c) means for communicating at least part of the information found to the buyer;
- d) means for receiving in the computer a buyer's request for an offer;
- e) means for communicating the request for an offer to at least two sellers;
- f) means for receiving offers, including terms of sale in response to the request for an offer, from at least two sellers;
- g) means for automatically generating rating information about seller offers based on a plurality of predetermined criteria, wherein said plurality of predetermined criteria include at least one criterion other than price;
- h) means for communicating information regarding at least some of the seller offers to at least one other seller;
- i) means for receiving an adjusted offer from at least one of the sellers during a specified auction period; and
- j) means for communicating information regarding at least some of the seller offers and at least part of the rating information to the buyer.